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TWO LABORS OF HERACLES ON A GEOMETRIC FIBULA

THE various types of fibula or "safety-pin" brought to light by excavation in Greece are in general not distinctive. Similar forms are found in Italy, in Central Europe, and even, at times, as far as Britain. There is, however, one type which does seem to be peculiar to Greece and apparently to Boeotia, the so-called "sail fibula" of the Geometric Period. It occurs in

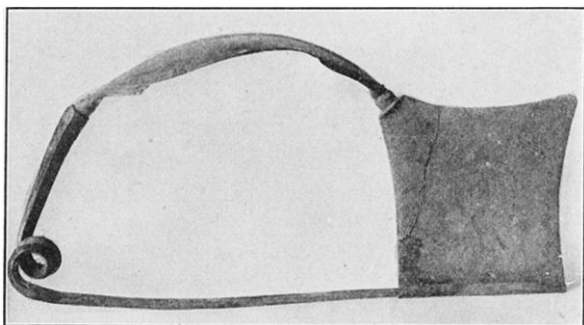


FIGURE 1. — GEOMETRIC FIBULA IN BOSTON.

several different shapes, the commonest of which is shown in Figure 1, from a well-preserved specimen in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.¹ In all its forms the shield for the point of the pin is widened into a plaque or "sail," thus forming the distinguishing feature of the type. The smooth flat surface obtained in this way furnished the artist an excellent field upon which to display his skill in drawing; and it is not unlikely that it was invented for the express purpose of pro-

¹ See *Annual Report*, 1898, p. 23, No. 2. I am indebted to Dr. Fairbanks for the photograph here reproduced.

viding additional space for decoration. In general the plaque, or "sail," is rectangular in shape, usually about an inch wide by an inch and a half long, and decorated with a horse, a bird, fishes, a boat, etc., incised in the Geometric style. A few examples are known in which the plaque is much larger, and such is the case with the one here published (Figs. 2 and 4), which is unique for its size, for the character of its drawing, and for the mythological subjects represented upon it.

Nothing positive is known as to the place where this fibula was found. It is said to have been discovered in Achaea not far from Patras, but as a majority of the specimens of which the place of finding is known came from the vicinity of Thebes, a Boeotian *provenance* may be conjectured for this one also. In shape it was originally similar to that shown in Figure 1, but it is no longer complete. There still remains the greater part of the plaque, broken into three pieces; and also probably part of the bow, although the latter is not now preserved with the plaque, which is in private possession in Philadelphia. The extreme length of this plaque is 14 cm. or $5\frac{9}{16}$ inches, its width is 12.4 cm. or $4\frac{7}{8}$ inches, and it is about half a millimetre thick. It is not, strictly speaking, rectangular, but the outer edges curve in on three sides. The side which formed the clasp of the pin was presumably straight, although but a small part of it is preserved. A considerable portion of the plaque adjoining the clasp has also been broken off, but fortunately the breaks come in such places that very little of the design is lost. The artist has chosen as his subject two of the labors of Heracles, the slaying of the hydra and the capture of the Ceryneian hind, and has represented them in true Geometric fashion.

On one side, surrounded by a border, are Heracles and Iolaus slaying the hydra (Fig. 2). About 1 mm. from the edge is a line following the contour of the plaque on all sides except the bottom, and 2 mm. within this line and running along beside it on the two upright sides are two lines, 2 mm. apart, made with the gouge. At the top of the plaque is a wavy line, made with the gouge, 2 mm. within the plain line; while 6 mm. from the latter is another line, made with the gouge, following the outer edge and joining the innermost lines on the two up-

right sides. Below is a straight line, made with the gouge, upon which the figures stand; and lower still is a wavy line forming

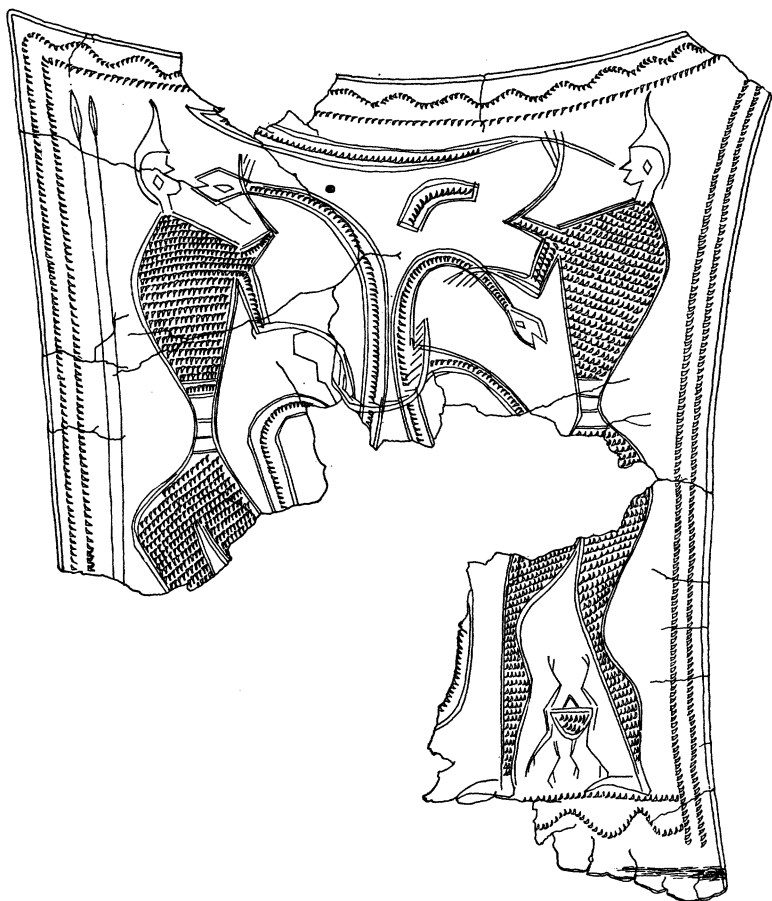


FIGURE 2.—HERACLES AND IOLAUS SLAYING THE HYDRA.

a band 4 mm. wide, made with the same instrument. Within this border is the design.

At the right stands Heracles, 11.4 cm. high from the top of his cap to the soles of his feet. He wears a peculiar, high, peaked cap or helmet which seems to come down behind the head. We may regard this, perhaps, as the *κυνέην ἐύτυκτον* of the *Scutum Herculis*, described as *δαιδαλέην, ἐπὶ κροτάφοις ἀραρυῖαν ἣ τ' εἴρυτο κάρη Ἡρακλῆος θεῖοιο* (ll. 136-138). He has a

sharp, pointed nose and prominent chin, and in the middle of his head a huge diamond-shaped eye.¹ About his waist are four pairs of lines which may be intended to indicate clothing; but the fact that similar lines are found about the horse and about the bird on the other side of the plaque (see Fig. 4) makes such an interpretation unlikely. The rest of the body from the neck to the ankles is covered with rows of small crescent-shaped marks, apparently made with a gouge. At first sight this might be regarded as armor; but the same marks appear on the sword of Heracles and on the bodies of the crab and the hydra, as well as on the animals of the other side, so that this interpretation is impossible. The hero is advancing to the left. In one hand, which is raised, he holds a huge curved sword with a sharp point, and with the other he grasps one of the necks of the hydra. From the drawing it is impossible to tell which is the right and which is the left hand. The waist is wasp-like and the hips prominent. The feet are curved downward and end in sharp points, by which the artist, perhaps, wished to show that the hero was not barefooted. The head and feet are drawn with a single line; the rest of the body with a double line, except from the neck to the arm, where there are three lines. These are shown in the accompanying illustration. The figure is complete except for a small break just below the waist.

Between the legs of Heracles is the crab sent by Hera to attack him. It has six legs, and, as already noted, its body has the same small crescent-shaped marks found on the body of the hero.

At the left, facing Heracles, is Iolaus. He, too, wears a pointed cap and has a huge eye in the middle of his head. He has the same pointed nose and prominent chin, the same lines about the waist, and his body is covered with the same crescent-shaped marks. The lower part of the figure, from just above the knees, is gone. Iolaus seizes one of the hydra's necks with one hand, which is raised, while with the other he grasps a sickle with which he is cutting the hydra's body. Along the blade of the sickle are lines evidently intended for

¹ A glance at the heads of the hydra and the deer shows that it was intended for an eye, not an ear.

drops of blood: The handle of the weapon is shown below his arm. As with the Heracles, a double line surrounds the figure, except on the head, which is drawn with a single line, and the breast, hip, and thigh, where three lines are used. Behind him are two spears planted with points up in the ground.

Between the two heroes is the hydra, represented as a snake with several bodies and at least two heads. One head with open mouth and a huge eye faces Heracles, and another is turned towards Iolaus. There may have been one or, perhaps,

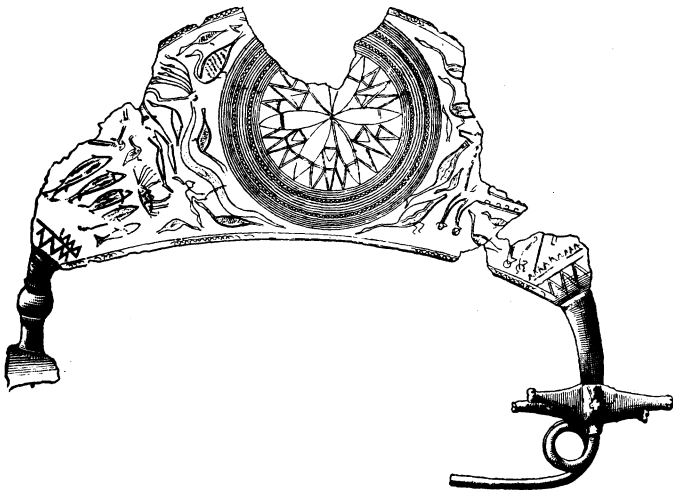


FIGURE 3.—HERACLES AND THE HYDRA ON A GEOMETRIC FIBULA IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

two others on the missing parts of the monster, but hardly more. That is, one may have been attached to the part of the body which is broken off near Heracles, and possibly another near the legs of Iolaus. In front of Heracles, and below, is a small portion of the hydra, which was evidently connected with the piece cut by the sickle. Just below the sword of Heracles is another portion of the monster, which has already been cut off. A row of the crescent-shaped marks adorns all the different pieces.

The primitive character of this drawing is at once apparent. It is, in fact, with one possible exception, the oldest illustration of a Greek myth which has come down to modern times. The

possible exception is the fibula No. 3205 (Fig. 3) in the British Museum,¹ which is of a different type, with diminutive figures scratched on the bow. Heracles may be recognized grasping a six-headed snake by the neck and preparing to strike it with a sword which he holds in his right hand. Near his foot is the crab. Below, Iolaus attacks the body of the monster, apparently with a curved sword or sickle. This fibula also belongs to the Geometric Period, but it is impossible to say whether or not it is as old as the one now under discussion. It seems to represent a more developed type, and so is perhaps later. It is interesting as another early representation of the hydra story, but the figures are so small that it cannot be compared with the fibula in Philadelphia as a work of early Greek art.

It is also interesting to find the hydra myth so well developed at this early date. The assistance given Heracles by Iolaus and the attack made upon him by the crab are regular parts of the story as told in Greek mythology. Iolaus is, however, not singeing the necks as in later art, but is cutting the creature with a sickle. In the *Ion* of Euripides, line 192, the Chorus see among the sculptures of the temple at Delphi Heracles slaying the hydra with a sickle, ἄρπη; and on an old Corinthian vase,² Iolaus is helping with the same weapon. The sickle, therefore, had a regular place in the early story. The later attributes of Heracles, the lion's skin, club, and bow, are all missing, but according to Suidas,³ Pisander of Rhodes, whose *floruit* was in the thirty-third Olympiad (648-645 B.C.), first gave Heracles a club. Robert⁴ makes Stesichorus first represent him with club, lion's skin, and bow, although he has the bow in the *Scutum Herculis* attributed to Hesiod.⁵ On the fibula the weapons are the curved sword, the sickle, and

¹ *Catalogue of the Bronzes in the British Museum*, p. 374, Fig. 87. My friend Professor P. V. C. Baur calls my attention to the horse on the right-hand side of this fibula. Beneath its feet are small disks which he takes to be wheels, indicating that this is intended for the Trojan horse. If this interpretation is correct, we have here another illustration of a Greek myth in the Geometric Period.

² *Arch. Zeit.* 1859, Pl. 125.

³ *S. v. Πελσαυδρος.*

⁴ *Bild und Lied*, p. 173.

⁵ *Scut.* ll. 129 ff. The bow is not actually mentioned, but the quiver full of arrows is.

the spear. The number of the hydra's heads varies in early Greek art, and only in comparatively late times became fixed at nine.

On the other side of the plaque, surrounded by the same border which encircles the fight with the hydra, is a second

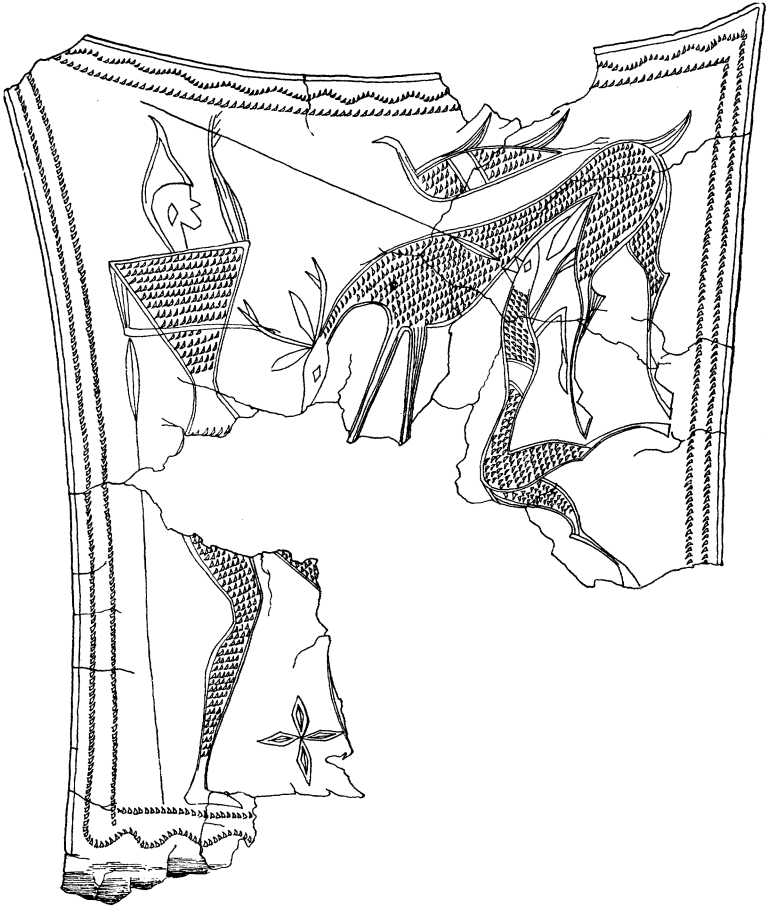


FIGURE 4.—HERACLES AND THE CERYNEIAN "HIND."

labor of Heracles, the capture of the Ceryneian hind (Fig. 4). The interpretation of this scene might have been difficult but for the presence of the combat with the hydra already described. The surface of the bronze is here somewhat injured by oxida-

tion, so that, although the lines in the combat with the hydra are perfectly clear, on this side they are often obscure, and sometimes require careful examination with a glass in a strong light before they reveal themselves. With patience all the design as reproduced in Figure 4 may be made out. The drawing is accurate.

At the left stands Heracles, facing to the right. He is drawn as the two figures on the other side are, with pointed nose, prominent chin, absurd eye in the middle of his face, wasp-like waist, and peaked cap, and his body is covered with the small crescent-shaped marks. He is advancing to the right, but is partially turned about so that both of his shoulders are seen, after the fashion common on Egyptian monuments, and employed on the "Fishermen Vase" from Phylakopi,¹ and elsewhere. This is an improvement on the drawing of the other side, where only one shoulder is shown and the artist has difficulty with the arms. With one hand he is grasping the deer by its right horn, while with the other raised above his head he is prodding it with a spear. Which hand is right and which is left is not easy to determine. If the spear is held in the right hand, the left arm ought not to be seen in front of the body; and if it is held in the left hand, the head of the spear would naturally be hidden by the deer's body. The hips and the upper parts of both thighs are missing, as well as the greater part of one of the legs. Between the legs is a four-pointed star. Behind him in the ground is a second spear, head up.

Facing Heracles is the "hind," represented, as usual in early art, with horns,² although here there seems to be no question as to the sex of the animal. The fore-hoofs and the tip of the nose are missing; otherwise the deer is complete.³ It has a narrow waist, a sharp, pointed tail turned upward, a large diamond-shaped eye, similar to that of the men, and hind hoofs some-

¹ D. G. Hogarth, *Excavations at Phylakopi in Melos*, Pl. XXII.

² Cf. Gerhardt, *Vasenbilder*, Pls. 99 and 100; and Pindar, *Olym.* III, 29, *χρυσόκερων ἑλαφόν*. In *Mém. Soc. Ant. Fr.* Vol. 55, p. 160, Fig. 1, M. Collignon publishes a small bronze representing a doe with horns suckling a fawn. It was found in a tomb near Thebes, along with three engraved sail fibulae.

³ Deer are known on Dipylon vases; see Poulsen, *Dipylongraber*, p. 99.

what exaggerated in size. The body is covered with the same crescent-shaped marks found on the other figures. Above the deer a large bird flies towards Heracles. Its legs stretch out behind,¹ its wings are raised, and its body is covered with the marks made by the gouge, except about the middle, where a band marked off by a double line on either side is undecorated.

Beneath the deer is a somewhat smaller animal placed at right angles to it. It has a slender body adorned with the crescent-shaped marks, except about the middle, which is left vacant as on the bird; long legs, pointed ears, and a diamond-shaped eye. At first it seemed as if the artist intended to represent a doe suckling a fawn; but although the surface of the bronze is injured about the head of the smaller animal, and the lines are obscure, the drawing reproduces accurately what is on the bronze. The figure, therefore, seems to be intended for a horse, put in, like the bird and the four-pointed star, merely to fill up. The horse is a familiar subject for the engraver of sail fibulae; and the *horror vacui* is a well-known principle in art of the Geometric Period in vase-painting and elsewhere. If the bronze were complete, probably fishes or birds, or perhaps other horses or a ship or a *swastika*, would be found upon it, to judge by analogy from other fibulae of this type.

The pursuit and capture of the Ceryneian hind is one of the well-known labors of Heracles, but it does not appear so frequently in Greek art as the combat with the hydra. Two versions of the story seem to have been current, one in which the deer was slain, usually regarded as the oldest;² and the other in which the animal was captured. This is apparently the version here represented, although the drawing is not sufficiently clear to exclude the possibility of the other interpretation. The next oldest illustration of this exploit seems to be a bronze relief from Crete, now in the Louvre, in which the

¹ Pottier, *Catalogue des vases antiques du Louvre*, I, p. 240, quotes Boehlau, p. 329, as recognizing an eagle in the flying birds on Boeotian Geometric vases, and a goose in the standing birds; but the long legs prove this bird to be some member of the heron family.

² See P. Friedländer, *Herakles*, p. 126, Note 1. It is illustrated by a drawing on an archaic bronze helmet (*Mon. des Nouv. Ann.* 1836, Pl. 1, 3), where the animal is bound.

hero has the deer on his shoulders.¹ The motive is, however, not exceptional, as is shown by a sail fibula in the British Museum, where one side of the plaque is decorated with a grazing deer facing to the right.

The technique of this bronze is interesting. The artist uses for his outlines a sharp-pointed tool; and a blunter tool for the line running round the edge of the plaque. For the crescent-shaped marks on the bodies a small gouge was apparently used; and a still smaller instrument of the same sort was employed on the wavy lines above the figures. The artist thus had four tools for his design. In drawing the outlines of the figures he shows a firm hand, although occasionally his line breaks, as, for example, on the back of Heracles in the slaying of the hydra. These breaks are reproduced in the illustrations. His use of the gouge is also interesting. Sometimes he makes a series of little punches, again he works the tool back and forth, pressing first on one side and then on the other. Sometimes his hand moves in horizontal lines, and again in a slanting direction. The artist clearly had ability, but he was not yet master of his art or of his materials. He shows skill in the composition of his groups, but he draws his figures from memory, not from models. This results in the absurd hands and faces, the eyes in the middle of the head, and the queer arms of Heracles and Iolaus in Figure 2. There he is trying to represent the figures in profile, and comes to grief with the arms; on the other side of the plaque he turns the upper part of his figure, showing both shoulders, and avoids this difficulty.

The drawing clearly belongs to the Geometric Period. This is proved by the shape of the horse and the deer, with their narrow waists, the bird and the rosette put in to fill up the vacant space, and by the general character of the design, not to mention the human figures. But it is Geometric art strongly influenced by Mycenaean. The wasp-like waists of the men,

¹ Published by Milchoefer, *Annali dell' Istituto*, 1880, pp. 214 ff. tav. T. A beardless figure advancing to the right bears on his shoulders a small deer with its legs tied together in front. Facing him and seizing him by the arm is a bearded figure holding a bow. Milchoefer interprets the scene as Apollo trying to prevent Heracles from carrying off the sacred hind. He dates the bronze in the seventh or beginning of the sixth century B.C.

the eyes placed in the middle of their heads,¹ the lines of crescent-shaped marks which cover the bodies of men and beasts alike,² are traditions from Mycenaean times.

The type of fibula upon which these drawings appear is not especially common.³ As already pointed out, it occurs in several varieties, all having the sail or plaque which is its distinctive feature. De Ridder enumerates fifteen examples in the museum at Athens,⁴ and a few more may be found in the larger museums of Europe. The commonest form is that reproduced in Figure 1. Here the bow, which is usually almost flat, is separated from the plaque by a button. At its other end another button separates it from the four-sided stem, which makes a coil, and is prolonged into the pin. These fibulae usually have a length of from three to four inches. Besides the plaque, the bow and the stem are decorated with patterns. The Heracles fibula is of the same general pattern, but larger and more elaborate. Its extreme length when complete must have been at least one foot. No other such specimen is known, although two large fibulae of the same form, but somewhat smaller, are on record as being in private possession in Athens.⁵

¹ For the eye see the "Fishermen Vase" from Phylakopi, *Excavations at Phylakopi in Melos*, Pl. XXII; Schliemann's *Tiryns*, Pl. XIV, etc.

² This was first pointed out by De Ridder, *Catalogue des bronzes de la Société Archéologique d'Athènes*, pp. 56 f. The tradition of the wavy lines may be observed, also, on the large Boeotian amphora in the Louvre, upon which, in relief, Perseus is represented slaying the Gorgon. See *B.C.H.* XXII, 1898, Pl. 5.

³ These fibulae have not, as yet, been adequately discussed. The more important articles concerned with them are:—

1. Studniczka, *Ath. Mitt.* XII, pp. 14 f.
2. Studniczka, *Z. Ethn.* 1889, pp. 221–223.
3. Studniczka, *Anthropologie*, 1890, p. 612.
4. Furtwängler, *Annali*, 1880, pp. 122–124.
5. Boehlau, *Jb. Arch. I.* III, 1888, pp. 361 ff.
6. Wolters, 'Eph. 'Apχ. 1892, p. 232.
7. Furtwängler, *Olympia*, IV, p. 53.
8. De Ridder, *Catalogue des bronzes de la Soc. Arch. d'Athènes*, pp. 56 f.
9. Walters, *Catalogue of the Bronzes in the British Museum*, pp. xxxix, lx, and 9.
10. Collignon, *Mém. Soc. Ant. Fr.* Vol. 55, pp. 159–179.

⁴ *Op. cit.* pp. 56 f.

⁵ One of these has a horse, fish, and *swastika* on one side, and a boat and fishes on the other. The other is adorned with men in a procession on one side, and a ship (?) on the other.

Another form of the sail fibula has the bow replaced by two, three, four, or five convex disks or shells in a row. This shape is less frequent. Three specimens now in Paris, but found in a Geometric grave in Boeotia, are published by Collignon.¹

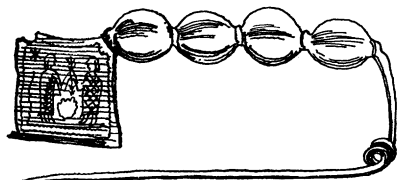


FIGURE 5. — GEOMETRIC FIBULA IN THE LOUVRE. SCALE, ABOUT 1 : 5.

Two of them have an extreme length of 27 cm., or about 10½ inches. They are, therefore, not much smaller than the Heracles fibula, but the scenes upon them are not mythological.² The most important is reproduced in Figure 5. But such large

specimens of whatever shape are rare. The five examples mentioned are the only ones known to me. Their great size would prevent them from being of much practical use, and one may well ask if they were not made for dedicatory or for funeral purposes.³

Fibulae of this type have been found at the Dipylon in Athens, at Rhodes, at Olympia, and at various sites in Boeotia, such as Elatea, Orchomenus, Tanagra, Plataea, and especially in the vicinity of Thebes. Their date must depend to a great extent upon the date assigned to Geometric vases, and particularly to vases of the Boeotian Geometric style. De Ridder⁴ has pointed out the differences in technique between these fibulae and the Dipylon vases, which are usually dated at the end of the eighth and beginning of the seventh centuries B.C. So, for example, Boehlau,⁵ and others. Pottier⁶ would assign the same date to the Theban Geometric vases, although he would

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 159–179. Four fibulae were found in the tomb, three of which were engraved; also two small bronzes, a doe suckling a fawn, and a standing doe; an engraved gem similar to the island stones, and small pieces of gold leaf with Geometric decoration. These fibulae have recently been acquired by the Louvre.

² The smallest of the three has three fish on one side and a *swastika* on the other. Of the other two one has a horse and a bird on one side, and a boat, two birds, and two fish on the other. The third has two warriors fighting on one side, and two men facing each other on the reverse.

³ For still another form see *Argive Heraeum*, II, Pl. 86, Nos. 867 and 868.

⁴ *Op. cit.* p. 56.

⁵ *Jb. Arch. I. III*, pp. 325–361.

⁶ *Op. cit.* I, pp. 230–233, and 242.

make the regular Geometric vases extend from the tenth to the seventh century B.C. Kroker¹ divides them into three classes: (1) those with geometric patterns only; (2) those with figures of quadrupeds, birds, and fishes; and (3) those with scenes from daily life, such as sea-fights, processions, etc. The third class he thinks continued until the middle of the seventh century. If this classification is correct, one might expect the fibulae with human figures to be contemporary with this third class. But it seems doubtful if any considerable period of time separated the three. Collignon, in fact, would date these fibulae at the end of the eighth or beginning of the seventh century,² partly on the analogy of discoveries at Olympia, partly in accordance with the date assigned by Pottier to Boeotian Geometric vases, and partly because of the oriental motives found upon them. De Ridder, too, points out the oriental motives, doubtless as evidence for lateness in date, although he appreciates the strong Mycenaean influence in the art, and concludes that the fibulae represent a period of transition. The oriental motives to which he calls attention are the griffin, the ship with a ram, and a deer shot with arrows; and, he might have added, the figure of a man between two heraldic lions on the plaque of a fibula published in the *Archaeologischer Anzeiger*.³ But it may be observed that such motives made their appearance very early on Greek soil. For example, griffins occur on the sarcophagus from Hagia Triada which is dated at the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century B.C.; heraldic lions are common on Mycenaean gems; and the early Greek ships, as shown by vases from the Cyclades, resemble Assyrian and Phoenician ships.⁴ The evidence, therefore, for direct oriental influence is not conclusive. It may have come through Mycenaean tradition.

The fibulae themselves furnish some evidence of date. The specimens found at Olympia are said to have been discovered in the lowest layer, which would indicate that they dated early in the eighth century; and the small bronze figures of animals

¹ *Jb. Arch.* I. I, pp. 95 ff.

² *Op. cit.* Vol. 55, pp. 163, 169, and 173.

³ 1894, p. 116, Fig. 3. On the reverse is a horse and a water-bird.

⁴ See Poulsen, *op. cit.* p. 100.

found with the fibulae published by Collignon point to the same time. The Heracles fibula might be supposed to afford some new evidence for date in the shape of the sword with which Heracles slays the hydra, and the peaked caps worn by the three human figures. The sword is clearly not Mycenaean.

That is straight and intended for thrusting, while this is curved and used for striking. According to Poulsen,¹ this is a characteristic of the Dipylon sword. So far as this evidence goes, it is in accord with the date already arrived at.

The peaked cap offers a more difficult problem. Caps or helmets ending in a point have been found in Crete, on Hittite sites, and elsewhere,² but I have been able to find but one other example in which the peculiar headgear of Heracles and Iolaus is exactly reproduced. That is in a bronze statuette (Fig. 6) formerly in the Tyskiewicz collection, published by Fröhner.³ The exact place of its discovery is apparently not recorded; but it is known to have been found somewhere in northern Syria, and is usually regarded as a Hittite bronze. It bears a general resemblance to a small series of statuettes, three of which were found in Phoenicia, one in Crete, one at Tiryns, one at Mycenae, and one, of silver, in Thessaly. This resemblance was noticed by Tsountas,⁴ who concluded that the specimens from Tiryns and Mycenae were Phoenician importations. Furtwängler⁵ thought them Syrian. Evans⁶ on the other hand argued that they were of true Mycenaean workman-



FIGURE 6.—BRONZE
STATUETTE FROM
NORTHERN SYRIA.

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 40.

² Cf., for example, the pointed helmet with a crest on the statuette found by Dörpfeld at Olympia in 1906 and published by Steiner, *Ath. Mitt.* 1906, pp. 219-227.

³ *La collection d'antiquités du Comte Tyskiewicz*, p. 114, Pl. VIII.

⁴ *Εφ. Ἀρχ.* 1891, p. 23.

⁵ *Die Antike Gemmen*, III, p. 18, Note 7.

⁶ *J.H.S.* XXI, 1901, p. 125.

ship, but thought that "their characteristic attitude as well as the Egyptianizing helmet (*i.e.* as shown by the statuette from the cave of Hermes Cranaeus near Sybrita, Crete) brings them in close relation to the figures of Resheph, the Semitic Lightning God, on Egyptian monuments." The most recent study of them has been made by Helbig,¹ who concludes that they are the product of old Syrian art, though there is much difference in date among them, the oldest example from Syria being earlier than the fifteenth century B.C.

The fact that one of these figures has the identical head covering worn by Hercules on the plaque is evidence for an eastern origin for this kind of cap, either Hittite or Egyptian; but it does not necessarily prove that the influence was direct, that is, that it came directly from the East to the artist who drew the design. The somewhat similar caps of the statuettes found on Greek soil, especially of the one from Crete (Fig. 7) prove that this influence was felt in Mycenaean and, perhaps, earlier times. It is fair to conclude, therefore, that this cap goes back to the Mycenaean, though it had originally come from the East. If, then, the shape of the cap is evidence for date, it would point to an early rather than to a late date.

In this connection, however, it should be noted that there is in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts a large Boeotian funeral vase² decorated with a relief of mounted bowmen wearing peaked caps or helmets (Fig. 8). The caps are quite different in shape from those worn by the figures on the bronze, but they may represent the same tradition. The vase cannot be



FIGURE 7. — BRONZE STATUETTE, FROM CRETE.

¹ *Jh. Oest. Arch.* I. XII, 1909, pp. 26-32.

² No. 99, 506, p. 8352. Vases of this class are discussed by De Ridder, *B.C.H.* XXII, 1898, pp. 439-471, 497-519. I am indebted to Mr. L. D. Caskey for the reference and for the photograph reproduced on p. 16.

dated with certainty, although De Ridder would assign it to the end of the seventh century B.C. A glance at this vase, or at the others in the series to which it belongs, reveals a much more developed art than that of the Heracles bronze. Taking



FIGURE 8. — MOUNTED BOWMAN. — DETAIL OF BOEOTIAN FUNERAL AMPHORA IN BOSTON.

all things into consideration, therefore, we shall probably not be far wrong in dating the fibula early in the eighth century B.C.

The finding of two of the exploits of Heracles depicted on a work of Greek art at so early a date calls up the theory of the

importation of the Heracles myth into Greece by the Phoenicians. It might be argued that the shape of the cap was evidence in its support. But it seems hardly likely that at the very beginning of Greek art, when the artist had only just begun to realize that he could draw the human figure, he would choose for his subjects the adventures of some newly arrived foreign demigod rather than the exploits of an old national hero.¹ The early date of this fibula is, therefore, evidence for the Greek origin of Heracles, although it does not exclude the possibility of affiliation with some eastern hero.

The bronze, then, is a monument of first-rate importance for the beginnings of Greek art and for the early history of Greek mythology.

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¹ In *Rh. Mus.* LXV, 1910, p. 220, E. Bethe argues that the story of Heracles and the Cretan bull is as early as the fourteenth century B.C.